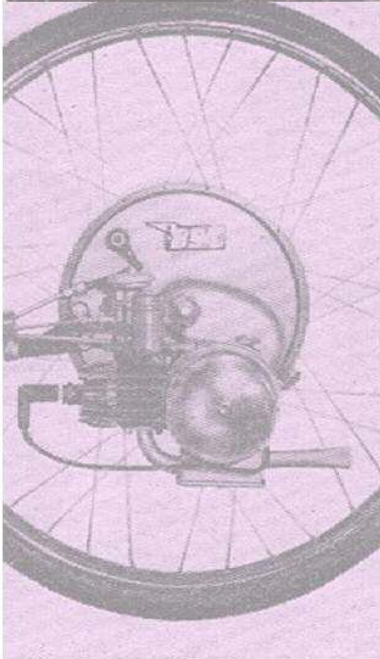


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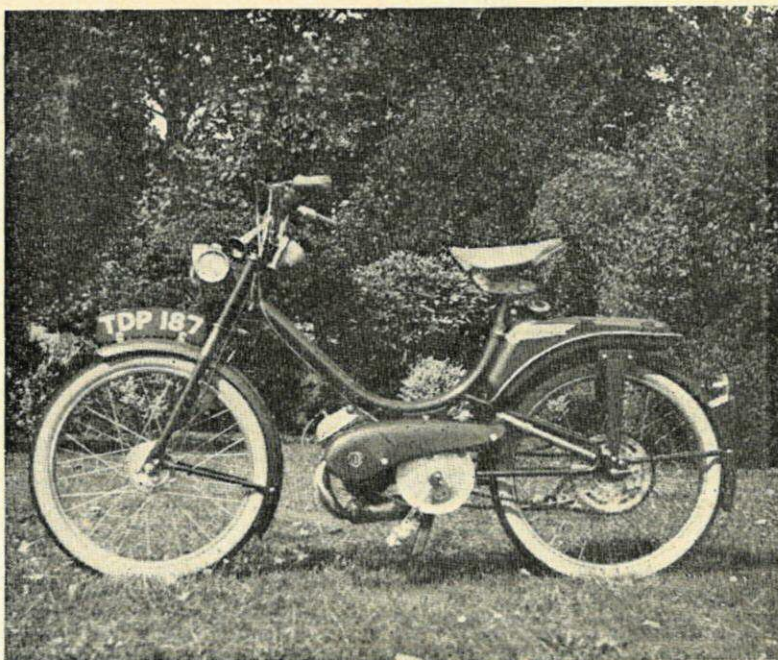
OCTOBER, 1959

ROAD TEST REPORT:

A Modern Auto-Clutch mo-ped

THE PALOMA

*The Paloma has a Lavalette engine—
offside view next page*



THE most popular mo-ped buy in the world today is the single speed type with automatic transmission and nearly all these originated in France. In essence they are civilised descendants of the original motorised cycles and retain many of the basic cycle characteristics of relatively light weight, easy handling and practical pedalling that have been lost by the more complicated gearbox jobs that have developed in other countries. One of these French machines is the Lavalette engined *Paloma* and it is an excellent example of the type.

Two models are available, the one tested being the higher priced model known as the DASL which has telescopic front forks, hub brakes to both wheels and a large capacity fuel tank under the saddle. The TTA model is a couple of pounds cheaper, has rigid forks a caliper front brake and the tank below the steering head. Saddles and handlebars are adjustable for height to ensure comfort and full control for riders of different physiques and pedal drives are by independent chains.

Both models use the well known *Lavalette 50/2* engine with automatic clutch. The engine is of "square" dimensions and the claimed output is 1.8 b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m. on a 6.1 to 1 compression ratio. These revs were easily exceeded on test with apparently higher power availability. Externally the unit is notable for the deeply finned cylinder head and the rigid webbing in the crankcase castings. Internally the layout is conventional in porting and uses a rather long skirted domed piston.

The carburettor is a *Gurtner D.12* fixed jet instrument with an automatically releasing starting lever mounted on top of the body and a built-on air filter. Ignition and lighting are by flywheel magneto of 6-volt, 10-amps output and the headlamp is of the single filament bulb type.

Of special interest is the automatic

clutch which is mounted on the crankshaft and can drive either on engine speed or road speed. Known as the "Multimatic" the clutch is actually quite simple in principle and consists of lined shoes bearing outwards against a drum which carries the driving pulley. Centrifugally operated weights operate in two stages so that the clutch has a locked position at speeds corresponding to about 9 miles per hour road speed.

Primary drive is by Vee belt to a large light alloy countershaft pulley running on roller bearings on the pedal shaft. Final drive is, of course, by chain.

Astonishing

Starting the engine can be effected either by kicking down a pedal with the machine on its stand or by simply pedalling the bicycle away. At a little over walking pace the clutch engages itself so smoothly that it can hardly be felt, the engine starts and accelerates the machine on the clutch. At around 9 m.p.h. the drive locks itself and remains so until the road speed falls again and permits the clutch to disengage progressively. It is a simple, reliable, fascinatingly easy and thoroughly efficient form of automatic transmission.

On the road the performance is frankly astonishing. The flexibility of the engine is such that a long hill with a maximum gradient of 1 in 7 could be climbed without pedalling from a slow start and then the machine would accelerate smartly up to a top speed not far short of 40 m.p.h. The speedometer fitted to the test machine was telling fairy stories but a genuine 37 m.p.h. on the flat

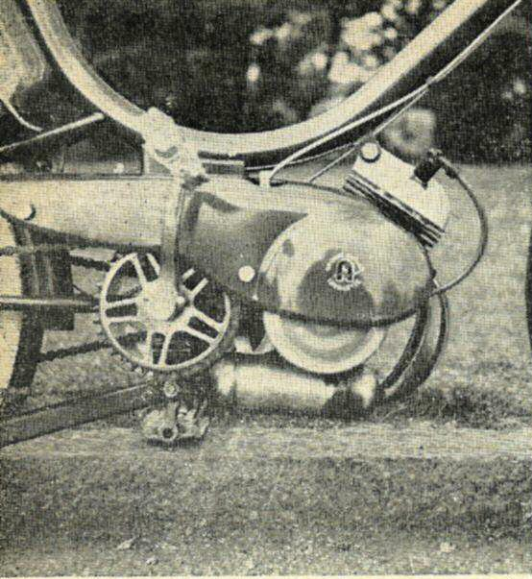
was achieved with a 13 stone rider sitting bolt upright.

This combination of power and flexibility makes a gearbox quite unnecessary in anything short of mountainous country and this in turn means a saving in weight, cost and complication. The ease of driving reduces effort both in traffic and over long distances and neither machine nor rider are over-worked.

It is natural to give a couple of turns of the pedals in starting from standstill but never absolutely necessary and the *Paloma* will make an excellent mount for any incapacitated rider who is unable to provide pedal assistance at all. At the same time it is worthy of note that the pedal gear is efficient and the machine can be pedalled with no more effort than a fairly heavy bicycle.

Exhaust noise is modest, barely noticeable at the normal cruising range between 20 and 30 m.p.h. and audible but not excessive at higher speeds. There is no mechanical noise whatsoever and the cycle part of the machine runs very sweetly. What vibration there is can be felt mostly through the saddle at high revs but over most of its range the power unit is very smooth indeed.

Both brakes are smooth and powerful and used together they stop the machine very quickly without noise or excitement and the good steering and road holding qualities of the *Paloma* are notable on both good and bad road surfaces. Despite a fairly limited travel, the telescopic forks operate smoothly and do not bottom on big bumps and the large section, flexible tyres provide comfortable riding in concert with the soft topped saddle and fully adjustable riding position.



important are the non-provision of a reserve fuel tap and the lack of shielding for the chains which will become somewhat messy in the Winter months unless frequently cleaned.

On the machine as a whole, however, the quality of material, finish and workmanship is very good, notably so on such items as the control levers which are often skimpy on low priced machines.

The Paloma is a thoroughly sound job throughout and represents a setting of new standards among popular priced mo-peds for performance, comfort, appearance and technical design.

Thoroughly Sound

There are detail criticisms to be made, the worst of which is that the light given by the headlamp is frankly poor, especially in view of the high road speeds obtainable. Less

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: "Lavalette" 50/2 model.
Bore: 40 mm. **Stroke:** 39.6 mm.,
capacity: 49.6 c.c. **Compression ratio:** 6.1 to 1. **Claimed output:** 1.8

b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m. **Cast-iron barrel, alloy head, domed alloy piston. Roller bearing big end, large section ball mains.**

CARBURETTOR: "Gurtner" D.12 with 23 main jet with self-canceling choke and air filter.

ELECTRICS: Flywheel magneto type VM/BB. Lighting coil output 6-volt/10 watts. Bulbs, front 6 v. 1 amp., rear 12 v., 4 amp.

TRANSMISSION: "Multimatic" centrifugal clutch mounted direct on mainshaft. Primary drive by V-belt to countershaft pulley with disengaging device. Final drive by chain with independent pedal drive.

WHEELS: 23in. x 2.00in. with "Dunlop" tyres. Alloy hubs with internal expanding brakes.

FRAME: Single main tube, rigid rear end with integral carrier. 10½-pint fuel tank. Telescopic front forks. Adjustable saddle and handlebars.

PRICE: £55 2s. 10d. (including P.T.).

CONCESSIONAIRES: Europa Imports Ltd., 183a London Road, Reading, Berks.



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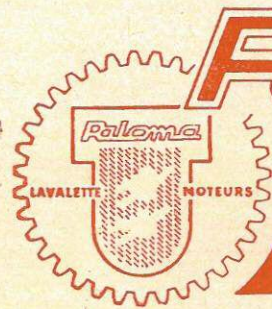
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